

**James Madison to James Madison Sr., May 4, 1794.  
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**TO JAMES MADISON. MAD. MSS.**

Philada May 4 1794

Hond Sir

By a vessel which sails for Fredg to-day I have sent a small box containing the following articles 6 ps very coarse muslins, 1 ps of finer, 2lb of Tea, 3 Books on Medicine & a few pamphlets, a sett of marking instruments. The muslins were bought as being extremely cheap, and useful for various purposes. If my mother or sister wants any part of them they will make free with them. If the finer piece should not be applicable to any better purpose, I allotted it for shirts, in which it is said to wear as well as linnen. The coarser ps I supposed might be dealt out in parts to my negro women if thought proper as far as would give them each some kind of garment. The cost would be a trifle and they wd probably be better pleased than with some thing in the ordinary way of greater value. I wish however that use may be made of them as already hinted. The coarse ps cost about 4 dols each. The fine one abt 4s. Va Curry a yard. The two books by Hamilton are for Dr. Taylor whom you will ask to accept of them. The other by Waller I send for yourself. It is said to be an able performance. If Dr. Taylor on perusal of it shd wish a copy, I will forward one for him. You will find that I have recovered the pamphlet by the French Chymist on the mineral waters of Virga. The Squash seed is of the same kind with that inclosed lately in a letter.

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As I retain the conviction I brought from home in favr of the Mill at my brothers, I have been endeavoring to dispose of the piece of land on the Mohawk river.<sup>1</sup> But the acct I have of it embarrasses me. I perceive that by selling it now, I shall get 40 or 50 per Ct less than it will probably fetch in a year or two. I am assured by *correct & authentic* information that it is of the best quality, that the country is rapidly settling all around it. That the navigation of the river will soon be opened, and that at a very few miles distance land of the same quality sells for 8 or 10 dollars an acre. Within three miles lotts in a town lately laid out sell for £50 an acre and are with difficulty got for that. I can not at present get more than 4 or 5 dollrs an acre. The gentleman who gave me my information is a respectable lawyer residing within three miles of the land and intimately acquainted with it as well as with that part of the Country. He writes me that within 2 years past similar lands have risen at least 50 per Ct & that the prospect of future rise is at least as great. Notwithstanding these favorable circumstances I am so much disposed to forward the plan of the Mill which I view as particularly favorable to the interest of my brothers as well as myself, that If a pursuit of it depends materially on my contribution, I shall not hesitate to make the sacrifice. Whether this be the case you can best

<sup>1</sup> Madison sold the tract, about 900 acres, to Theodorus Bailey and John B. Van Wyck for five dollars an acre, January 5, 1796.— *Mad. MSS.* See his letter to Jefferson, August 12, 1786. *Ante*, vol. ii., p. 265.

decide & I will thank you for a line on the subject immediately on the receipt of this. Perhaps your funds may be competent to the demands of the present year. I am persuaded also that notwithstanding the low rate of the [illegible] paper, there would be less loss in your sale of that than I should suffer from the present sale of the land.

The bill for suspending importations from G. B. & Ireland which passed the H of Reps by 59 agst 34 was rejected in the Senate, who are determined to rely on the extraordinary mission of Jay to sue for satisfaction. The H. of Reps are occupied with new taxes to defray the expence of the naval armament, the fortifications &c. An increase of the impost,

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a stamp tax, further excises and a land tax are all proposed. I much fear that the aversion to the last will soon involve this Country in the pernicious revenue system of Europe and without ultimately avoiding the thing dreaded, as a land tax will be sure to be added on the first great occasion that may arise. It is not certain how much longer the session will be spun out. I hope it will end at farthest within the present month. If I should determine to make above mentioned, I shall probably be obliged to make a trip to New York before I return to Virginia.